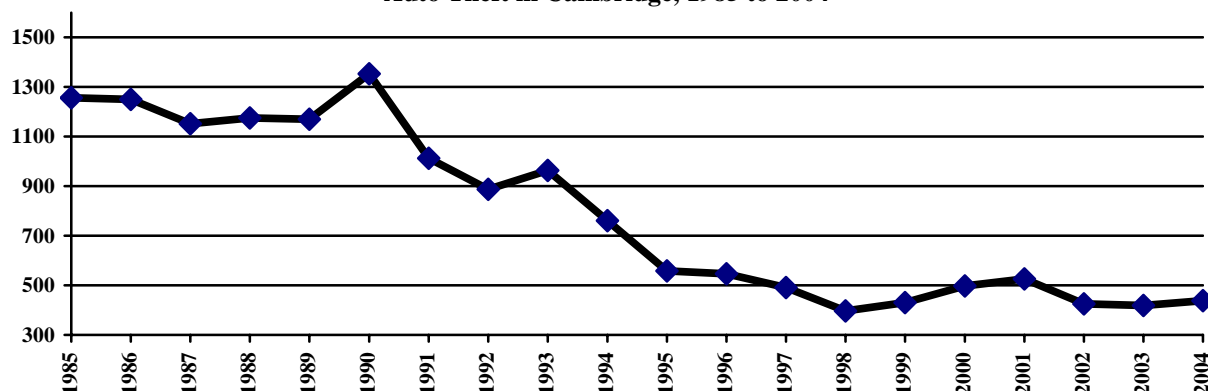


AUTO THEFT

is defined as the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle, this offense category includes the theft of automobiles, trucks, buses, motorcycles, motor scooters, and snowmobiles. This definition excludes the taking of a motor vehicle for temporary use by persons having lawful access.

**Twenty Year Review:
Auto Theft in Cambridge, 1985 to 2004**



419 reported in 2003 • 438 reported in 2004

In the mid-1970's there were nearly 3,000 cars reported stolen yearly in Cambridge. These figures declined to approximately 1,700 thefts in the 1980's, and to less than 1,000 thefts yearly in the 1990's. Today's figures represent one of the most dramatic reported decreases in a single crime type. The decline can be attributed to the virtual elimination of "chop shops" and interstate auto theft rings, crackdowns on insurance fraud, advances in automobile security, and new technology that enables patrol officers to quickly check a vehicle's registry listing and determine if it is stolen.

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF AUTO THEFT

NEIGHBORHOOD	2002	2003	2004*	CHANGE 03-04	% OF TOTAL
East Cambridge	55	43	56	+30%	13%
M.I.T. Area	9	12	15	+25%	3%
Inman/Harrington	48	56	45	-20%	10%
Area 4	64	58	43	-26%	10%
Cambridgeport	56	69	56	-19%	13%
Mid-Cambridge	29	36	36	N/A	8%
Riverside	30	33	26	-21%	6%
Agassiz	19	15	10	-33%	2%
Peabody	38	25	53	+112%	12%
West Cambridge	18	30	38	+27%	9%
North Cambridge	45	32	41	+28%	9%
Cambridge Highlands	3	5	12	+140%	3%
Strawberry Hill	13	5	5	N/A	1%
Total	427	419	436	+5%	100%

*Please note that two incidents in 2004 took place at unknown locations, therefore they are not included in this breakdown.

Cambridge has reported less than 500 stolen autos for the past three consecutive years. East Cambridge and Cambridgeport each reported the highest number of thefts, followed by Peabody, which reported a 112% increase in thefts over 2003. Auto thefts in East Cambridge increased slightly over last year's total but still

remained 27% lower than 2000's total. The majority of auto thefts occurred in repeat locations such as along Bent, Otis, Second and Hurley Streets. Cambridgeport recorded an 18% decrease in auto theft this year compared to 2003, and a 12% decrease overall since 2000. The majority of activity reported along Allston, Pearl and Brookline Streets and Putnam Avenue. Area 4, which is traditionally one of the highest reporting neighborhoods, experienced a 20% decline in 2004. While the Highlands reported the greatest increase overall, it should be tempered by the low numbers reported in that neighborhood, making even a handful of additional thefts significant.

The beginning of 2004 started off with a 19% increase in auto thefts compared to the first quarter of 2003. East Cambridge and Cambridgeport were reporting the most number of thefts as of that first quarter. Housebreaks that also resulted in auto thefts had become a trend in Cambridge since the beginning of the second quarter of 2004. There were 5 such incidents in 2004. Previous to that, Cambridge reported 6 total incidents from 1997-2003. By the final quarter of the year, only a 5% increase overall was recorded as thefts began to regress towards the average.

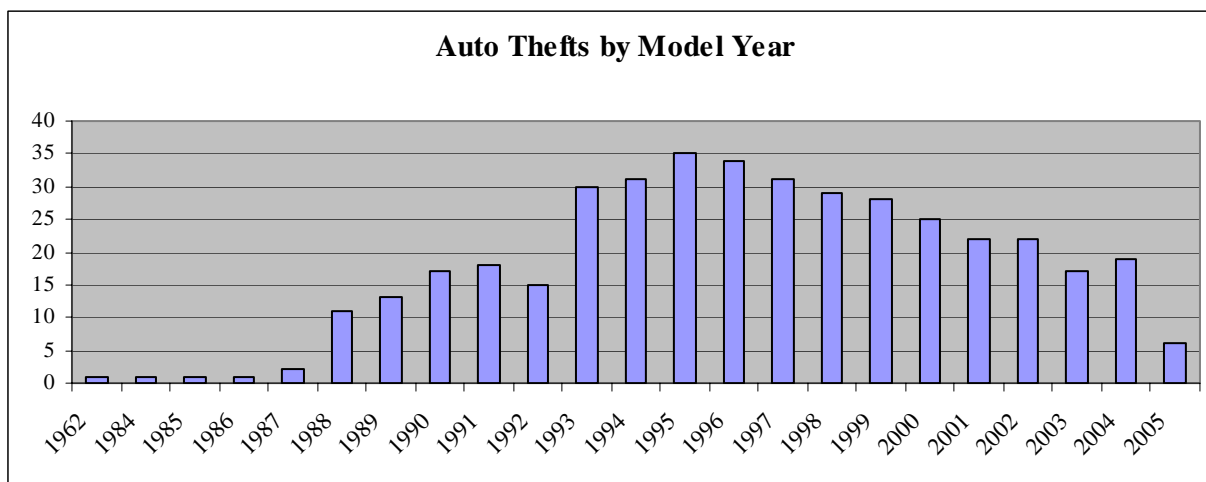
MAKES AND MODELS

Hondas were by far the most commonly stolen auto of 2004, constituting 31% of all reports. Toyotas and Fords each came in second place making up approximately 10% of all thefts each. This information is consistent with historical and national trends, as Hondas are the most commonly stolen vehicle nationwide. As is clear in the table below, the top five vehicle model types stolen mirrors the top five stolen statewide in Massachusetts.

The most targeted model this year was the Honda Civic, followed by the Accord and the Acura Integra. The Toyota Camry, traditionally a commonly stolen model, was just behind the Integra. These particular models are stolen more than any other due to several factors. These cars are some of the most commonly *owned* models in the nation, making them more widely available. Statistical probability alone would place them near the top of the theft list. Also, car thieves tend to look for average-cost, commonly owned, inconspicuous cars. High-priced luxury cars are not stolen very often because they are too easy for someone to spot, and are more likely to be equipped with expensive alarm systems. Scooters have also become a more common target, as they have grown in popularity in recent years.

TOP FIVE STOLEN MAKES & MODELS STOLEN			
Makes		Model type	
Honda	136	Honda Civic*+	72
Ford	45	Honda Accord*+	54
Toyota	44	Acura Integra+	28
Acura	32	Toyota Camry+	21
Chevrolet	20	Toyota Corolla*+	9
*Also in the National Top Five			
+Also in the Massachusetts Top Five			

Analysis of the age of stolen vehicles shows that the highest demand is for cars that are eight to nine years old. Thieves looking for transportation steal these cars because they are inconspicuous. Thieves looking to make a profit target these years because parts for these cars are in higher demand. The other high cluster, with 1999-2002 cars, represents "joyriders," looking for newer models to increase their sense of status, and thieves intending to sell the entire car for profit. The table below shows the incidence of auto theft by year of the model.



AUTO THEFT RECOVERIES

Approximately 60% of the cars reported stolen have been recovered to date. Sixty percent of the recovered cars were located throughout Cambridge and Boston. Autos were also recovered as far away as New Jersey, Connecticut, Florida and Canada. When damage is reported on recovered vehicles, it is most commonly ignition damage and body damage. Twenty-four (24) cars were fully or partially stripped for parts, and tires were missing from 16 cars. Radios were missing in 19 vehicles. Note that additional information regarding parts stolen from vehicles that were not themselves stolen can be found in the Larceny section of this report. The following table shows a breakdown of recovery locations.

Boston	
East Boston	0
Allston/Brighton	1
Back Bay/ Fenway	0
South Boston	2
Roxbury	8
Dorchester	5
Mattapan	0
West Roxbury/Jamaica Plain	0
Hyde Park	1
Roslindale	2
Unknown	70
Cambridge	
East Cambridge	6
MIT Area	0
Inman/Harrington	8
Area 4	6
Cambridgeport	4
Mid-Cambridge	6
Riverside	2
Agassiz	1
Peabody	7
West Cambridge	4
North Cambridge	6
Cambridge Highlands	1
Strawberry Hill	1
Unknown	24
Other Cities	
Somerville	23
Everett	8
Medford	6
Revere	5
Chelsea	4
Waltham	3
Quincy	3
Other	224

Protect your car!! Please see page 139 for tips on how you can protect yourself against becoming a victim of auto theft.

Auto Theft in Cambridge 2004

